

Katherine Douglas

Public Comment - SB County Action Network

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From: Jeanne Sparks <jeanne.sparks@icloud.com>
Sent: Friday, December 1, 2023 12:03 PM
To: sbcob
Subject: County Housing Element - Provision of public parks, recreation and trails
Attachments: County Housing Element - Provision of public parks, recreation and trails

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December 1, 2023

Chair Das Williams
Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors
sbcob@countyofsb.org

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Re: Santa Barbara County Housing Element and Public Recreation

Dear Chair Williams and Honorable Members of the Board:

Santa Barbara County Action Network (SBCAN) is writing to urge the Board of Supervisors to prioritize and encourage the inclusion of new public parks, recreation and trails in major new housing developments under consideration as part of the Housing Element.

We believe that this approach has been successful in County planning historically with projects such as the Rice Ranch development in Orcutt providing both substantial new housing (850 units) and Orcutt Community Park and Orcutt Hills Trails. Such a mix of housing, especially affordable housing, and public recreation will provide complete, equitable and sustainable communities.

SBCAN is a countywide grassroots organization that works to promote social and economic justice, to preserve our environmental and agricultural resources, and to create sustainable communities. SBCAN advocates a holistic approach to community planning that integrates housing, open space, and transportation to meet the needs of all members of our community and future generations.

We consider the integration of new public parks, recreation and trails into new development planned under the Housing Element as essential to achieving our social equity, environmental justice, and sustainable community goals. This will allow residents of new development, as well as those living in existing nearby neighborhoods that lack such essential services, to live in high quality complete communities. This is particularly important for low-income households, as these residents need access to both affordable housing and high-quality public recreation.

Therefore, we support the Board considering new infill development proximate to jobs, transit and shopping, particularly for affordable housing, and believe that including accessible public parks, recreation and trails in such new neighborhoods is a key equity and environmental justice issue.

We urge the Board to ensure that Housing Element Programs prioritize and encourage developments that include new public parks, recreation areas and trails.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ken Hough
Executive Director